



Tips for Early Childhood Educators During COVID-19

DISCUSSING THE VIRUS WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

Children may have questions or concerns about COVID-19. As an early childhood educator, you can help children feel safe by providing honest and straightforward explanations about the virus and focusing on what children can do to keep everyone healthy. The virus has had a larger impact on communities of color and children may have had a wide range of experiences over the last few months. Some may have loved ones or community members who have become ill, while others may have remained sheltered from the virus's effects.

STRATEGIES FOR DISCUSSING THE VIRUS



ASK CHILDREN WHAT THEY HAVE HEARD ABOUT THE VIRUS

This will help you address what they are most concerned about. Try not to overload children with too much information that may cause more worry.



ASK CHILDREN HOW THEY FEEL ABOUT WHAT THEY HAVE HEARD

Let them know that it is OK to feel scared or sad. You can also reinforce that many children and adults have those same feelings.



ENCOURAGE CHILDREN TO BE HEROES IN REDUCING THE SPREAD OF THE VIRUS

Explain that their actions can make a big difference in keeping people healthy in the classroom and in their neighborhoods. Discuss the new procedures in your classroom and how everyone plays a part in keeping the class healthy through hand washing, wearing a mask, not sharing toys and staying a safe distance from friends.

LEARN MORE 

DISCUSSING THE VIRUS WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

(CONTINUED)



DESCRIBE THE VIRUS IN SIMPLE LANGUAGE

- The coronavirus is a new type of virus or illness. Some people call it COVID-19. The symptoms usually include a fever, cough, and having a hard time taking deep breaths.
- The coronavirus does not usually make children very sick.
- Most people with coronavirus can stay at home and rest to get better. Only a small number of people become very sick and need to go to the hospital.
- Doctors and nurses are working hard to help people who need more care.

RESOURCES FOR YOUR CLASSROOM

SESAME STREET COMMUNITIES—H IS FOR HANDWASHING

www.sesamestreetincommunities.org/activities/h-is-for-handwashing/

SUPPORTING CHILDREN DURING COVID 19

www.nctsn.org/resources/supporting-children-during-coronavirus-covid19



REFERENCES

1. CDC—Talking to Children about Coronavirus
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/talking-with-children.html>
2. Gurwitch R., & Brymer, M. (2020). Supporting Children During Coronavirus (COVID-19). Los Angeles, CA, and Durham, NC: National Center for Child Traumatic Stress.